

Mr. Arnold J. Kleiner, manager
WPAR-TV
Towson, Md.

7627 Old Receiver Road
Frederick, Md. 21701
12/3/88

Dear Mr. Kleiner,

If you are not sued for libel over tonight's Front Page story you will be lucky. It was ^{and} a virtuoso display of factual ignorance, irresponsibility, bad taste that also could not have been more inappropriate on a subject like the assassination of a President.

Don't misunderstand me. I'm not looking for personal attention and were you to invite me to be on a show I could not be. I've not driven out of Frederick in 11 years, I'm 75, in impaired health, only recently had an eye operation (please excuse my typing), and when I leave here I'm driven.

Blaine Taylor was introduced to your audience as a subject expert when he appears to be no more than Howard Donahue's ghost. He displayed his expertise immediately by assaulting the survivors of that great tragedy stating what anyone who has read only some of the literature has to know is a lie, that the Kennedy "family doesn't want the autopsy released." It was published by the Warren Commission and in many books, beginning with mine.

He said that the Secret Service, which was the President's guard, killed him, conjecturing only whether it was accidental or on purpose! And then he showed a picture of Agent Hickey, riding in the followup car holding the automatic rifle up without telling your audience, if he was not too ignorant to know the truth, that the picture was taken much later! And not at the scene of the crime but en route to the hospital.

To give credibility to this incredible slander he noted that other heads of state have been killed by their guards.

Howard Donahue is a nice guy, an expert shot and gunsmith and possessed by an impossible theory, has been for years, in fact, and contrary to Taylor's statement, he did not duplicate the shooting attributed to Oswald. One of many efforts he matched the implied and impossible speed only. (The conditions and the target were radically different, among other things, and the test of which he was part, for CBS-TV, had such terrible results CBS did not even give their results, despite Donahue's speed of firing. One time, that is, when a rebuilt weapon did not misfire, as it did often.)

There is a simple way for you to see how utterly impossible this theory is, a motion picture and a still. I printed the still in my first two books which the Enoch Pratt Library did have. A good print of the Zapruder motion picture was used on a much better segment of Front Page, the prize-winning documentary by

a Baltimorean whose mother lives on Donachie Road, ~~while~~ ^{He} is at College Park. His name is Garard (Chip) Selby, he works for Discovery TV ~~while~~ working for his master's degree in communications. His documentary was his thesis. It was aired with high ratings by the A&E channel. *He won CINE's Golden Eagle award.*

Only seconds before the assassination the Zapruder film shows the crowded *Secret Service* followup car with all the too many in it sitting except for the agents on the running boards. Three seconds, approximately, before the fatal shot, a picture taken by AP photographer Ike Altgens shows all those people, agents and staff, still sitting. It shows both jump seats occupied. Now how in the world could the fastest man in the world get that rifle out from between those seats and feet and legs and stand and get it ready to shoot and aim and shoot in ~~just~~ three seconds?

There is more wrong with that show and if you want more specifics have one of your people send me a transcript and I'll tell you or if you'd prefer have them play parts and tape what I say. In all respects it was truly disgraceful. (I won't be home the 6th.)

~~Are~~ your people in news so uncritical that if a man says he is an expert they just assume he is? I'm in a position to know who had engaged in real study or scholarship ^{in Freedom of Information litigation} because I've obtained about a third of a million pages of once-withheld official records, I make them available to anyone, and Taylor has not made any such request. Donahue was here once but he asked to see almost nothing. Moreover, I've published six books on the subject, know ^{who} ~~how~~ gets them and don't recall Taylor getting even one. Have your news people no standards at all?

I'm all for the people knowing all they can about the assassination and its official investigations if they are not deceived and misled. The subject ought not be treated as a cheap novel. Aside from the suffering of the family and many people from whom I hear all the time, the assassination of a president has the effect of a coup d'etat and that is a serious matter, not a parlor game.

And, alas, there is no way you can take all that falsehood and misinformation out of the minds of those you victimized with it.

I do not presume that you had personal knowledge of this. Rather, I think you probably didn't. I write because I think you may be vulnerable and because this was so wretched a business I think you should know and find out if your news people ask for credentials, not just some self-serving pontification.

*How ~~unlike~~ unlike you
responsible editorials!*

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg
Harold Weisberg